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	PERC-00	PDI-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00
	VCI-00	H-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01	VCIE-00
	DCP-00	NSAE-00	NIMA-00	PA-00	SCT-00	DOHS-00	FMPC-00
	SP-00	SSO-00	TRSE-00	ASDS-00	CBP-00	BEG-00	EPAE-00
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WHITE HOUSE FOR OVP - JOSEPH WOOD

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/10/2016

TAGS: PTER, PREL, PHUM, HR

SUBJECT: MEDIA FRENZY OVER ALLEGED CIA FLIGHTS THROUGH
DUBROVNIK

Classified By: Ambassador Ralph Frank for reasons 1.4 (b) & (d)

1. (U) SUMMARY AND COMMENT: Croatian media are fixated on allegations in an April 5 Amnesty International (AI) report regarding U.S. Central Intelligence Agency use of Dubrovnik Airport. According to the report, a Boeing 737 used by the CIA for renditions of terror suspects landed twice in Dubrovnik between 2002 and 2005. President Mesic and opposition politicians have responded to media inquiries by calling for more investigation. Newspapers are now quoting MFA sources as saying the GoC will gather information about the alleged landings from the Ministries of Interior, Defense and Transport as well as from intelligence services and the Dubrovnik Airport. Just last week, the GoC responded to a Council of Europe request to clarify procedures for the supervision of foreign secret services and the use of Croatia's airspace and airports.

B1

COMMENT.

END SUMMARY AND

B1

NEWSPAPERS JUMP FROM ALLEGATIONS TO PURE CONJECTURE

3. (U) As often happens in the Croatian media, papers made much more out of the story than the AI report alleged. While AI alleged that the plane was the same that had at one time transported Khaled el-Masri from Macedonia to a CIA detention facility in Afghanistan (where, according to media reports, it was later discovered he was a victim of mistaken identity), the media reported that el-Masri had been on the plane when it stopped in Dubrovnik.

4. (U) A particularly scathing commentary appearing in the daily "Novi List" under the headline "Devil in Dubrovnik" criticized the GoC's muted response. CIA planes have cruised the length and breadth of Europe, according to author, while CIA agents have helped themselves to the European "buffet of suspects." The GoC stands by while a foreign secret service extends its tentacles over Croatia, the commentary continued, then concluded by thanking God that the CIA has not set up a secret prison camp in Croatia for torturing people with "suspect names" and "even more suspect religion."

5. (U) The daily "Jutarnji List" responded in a more measured commentary, saying the CIA has used airports and other services in many European countries in the GWOT. Even if the US had requested to use Dubrovnik airport for this purpose, Croatia could not have refused or it would have been an unnecessary slap in America's face, according to the commentary. Croatia, "Jutarnji" reminded readers, needs America incomparably more than vice versa.

POLICE ACCOUNTS DO NOT SUPPORT ALLEGATIONS

6. (U) While media carried confirmation from Dubrovnik airport director Tonic Peovic that two private Boeing 737 landings took place, head of Croatian maritime and airport police Zoran Niceno was quick to explain that there were no indications these flights were related to the transport of terrorism suspects. Niceno was quoted explaining that the 737 arrived in Dubrovnik from Sudan with eight crew members on April 23, 2005, and left two days later with seven more passengers. These passengers were not subject to any visa regime, according to Niceno, and "weren't suspicious in any way."
FRANK

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